THE UNDERGRADUATE.

VOL. XXI. MIDDLEBURY, VT., DECEMBER, 1895. No. 3.

THE UNDERGRADUATE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY DURING COLLEGE YEAR.

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One College Year, - - - - - $1.00
Single Copies, - - - - - - .12

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The UNDERGRADUATE is constantly on sale at Marshall's Book store or may be obtained of the business manager.

EDITORS' TABLE.

THAT there has been a delay in getting out some of the numbers of the UNDERGRADUATE, and es pecially the December issue, need not be mentioned, but that it is unavoidable may not be so apparent to every one. It appears to many subscribers that with scholarship at Middlebury college, the students ought to be able to get out a uniformly good monthly or weekly, or whatever it may be. It is true that we ought to do this. But, like any other college institution, there are times when a great deal of interest is taken and times when every one seems to wish to place such responsibility on some one else. Of late it has seemed that the student body has all the literary work it can handle in the work required by the college, and there has been little incentive to contribute to the UNDERGRADUATE. The editorial board which heads this column has been much broken up and the bulk of the work has been done by three of the editors.

There is really much reason why the college paper should be well supported. In the first place, it represents our future Alma Mater, and very little printed in any other paper is representative of the sentiment of the students. Again, it gives a chance for a student who has any literary taste to see what he can do in literary lines and reportorial work. Contributions from students and alumni are always acceptable, if well written and in any way fit for publication in these columns.

We trust that when another term begins the UNDERGRADUATE will better represent the ability of the students and that their ability will be apparent in what they write.

LAST month there was a sharp editorial on athletics. This month it seems that there ought to be a longer one. It has been quite generally lamented that we had no foot-ball team the past season, and perhaps that fact has not added anything to the idea that Middlebury is a progressive institution. Local sports and even some of the more enthusiastic alumni have been free with sarcasm and irony as regards the activity of the fellows. There were several reasons why there was no foot-ball team here last fall. The principal one was because those most interested in foot ball did not feel that they could spare the time. Another reason was an evident lack of harmony among possible players. This is to be much regretted. There are certain influences in a college which, if allowed to run their full course, will break up any institution of a college. An athletic team does not represent any one college faction, but any reward for merit falls first up on the college which it represents and then upon individual players.

There is no reason to think that we may not have a better base-ball team next season than for many years before. Middlebury has excelled in base-ball; it never had a foot-ball team until the season of 1893. There is plenty of good material in the college for a good base ball team and plenty of enthusiasm to develop it.

The team will probably get to work by March 1, and when the season opens the management will have selected a team which can do good and steady work. The team will need hearty and substantial support from the college, however, and no factional influence must be allowed in its management.

THE Christmas season comes with joy and gladness, with its message of "peace on earth and good will toward men." To none is the festal time more welcome than to the student who is buoyed up during the cares and anxieties of examination, by the thought of the good time in the near future. Then comes the happy home-going, with laughter and mirth, till even the gruffest occupant of the car smiles responsively and puts his hand to his pocket to add a little to the season's pleasure to the poorly dressed woman across the aisle. Thus the joy is propagated from person to person, from State to State, from nation to nation, till on the Christmas morning the whole earth rings with gladness, and all hearts are joined in the sweet anniversary song.

IT has always been thought that in a college of this kind there should be a personal understanding between professor and student, and that in such case the student benefits much by it. Indeed, it has been the strong point in the argument for a small college instead of a large one. That this personal understanding, however, does not always result in the gratification of the student may perhaps be as much expected as that the student should always be encouraged.

We think that the students as a body do generally value very highly a personal acquaintance with their various instructors, and whether criticism be favorable or adverse, the suggestions they receive are profitable to them and are incentives for better work and a cause of increased respect for their instructors.

But we are sure the students had much rather their faults would be made known to them personally than to be related to their neighbors, only to be enlarged upon and repeated to every listening ear.

It is not particularly pleasant to the present student body to be unfavorably compared with students who were here in former years, nor to a class to be unfavorably compared with other classes in college. Neither is it a pleasing experience for a student to incidentally hear that his work is not satisfactory, and that he has been severely criticized to students and outsiders who may or may not be his friends.

As a matter of fact the students here to day are doing more and better work than has ever been done here before. The standard of scholarship is higher and the students take up the work with more avidity and whole heartedness. If students do not do the work required of them; if they are not up with their class, and do not seem to be here for the purpose of study, there is a well-known remedy which never fails to work. But while they are here they deserve to be told of their short-comings fairly and to be held accountable as individuals, and not bunched as a class of chronic fault-finders or poor students.

LITERARY.

A DEFENCE OF THE SMALL COLLEGE AGAINST THE LARGE.

There is today a growing tendency among many people, especially those of the younger generation, to rather look down upon the small college as compared with the large one. They seem to think that if a college has on its rolls only two or three hundred students, it is almost a waste of time for one to spend his time there They laugh scornfully when they hear of its foot ball or base ball team being defeated and declare that they would never be seen at such a college. Yet, in spite of such assertions, we, who are students of a small college, should not feel that we are spending our time at an unworthy place.

The idea is a mistaken one, that a good college education can be obtained only at a college which, like Harvard or Yale, contains a thousand or two students. To be sure the professors at such a college usually receive munificent salaries. In many cases they have, as it were, reached the top of the ladder, which they have been long ascending. Their fame naturally eclipses that of the professors at smaller institutions. Yet when one class contains from four to six hundred members, as is the case in the five or six largest colleges of our land, each student sees but little of the eminent professors of the colleges which he attends. Indeed, it is said that the under-classman of these colleges recites almost entirely to so-called tutors, who are certainly not above the average standard of the professor in the small institution. So it comes about that those colleges, whose whole enrollment shows but from two to four hundred students, turn out as many good scholars comparatively as those whose students number six or

seven times as many. Indeed, it is an interesting fact that the great German universities, where so many students of all nations take up post graduate work, say that their best scholars from America are the ones who are graduates of the small college.

Nowadays athletics are, to say the least, an important feature of college life and there the large college always comes out ahead. She can put larger and better equipped teams in the field, which will win nearly every contest they engage in. Her students will have plenty of opportunities to boast of the victories of their eleven or nine. The brilliant athlete can win fame at such a college without overtaxing his brain.

On the other hand, the student of the small college must endure the disagreeable thought that his team has and will often be defeated by teams from larger institutions. Yet at the large college only a comparatively small number of students, who have the good fortune to excel as athletes, indulge in athle ic sports. The majority are mere onlookers, while at the small college every student who wishes has the chance to develop whatever tendencies he may have in the athletic line.

The student at a small institution does not come in contact with so many fellow-students. Yet he is more thoroughly acquainted with those whom he does have. His college does not employ such high-salaried professors nor perhaps does he attend recitations in such handsome buildings. Yet, unlike his fellow of the large college, he really knows and is known by all the professors as well as the students of his Alma Mater, and after all what real difference does a costly building make with the amount one will learn inside it. Garfield, Hayes and Blaine were all graduates of small colleges. In fact, if a student starts out with a determination to learn what he can and make a success of himself, he is just as liable to succeed, whether he graduates at a college of two hundred students or at one of two thousand.

W. B. Dunton, '98.

THOUGHTS.

The prevalent idea of humanity seems to be that some men are born with a natural gift for obtaining knowledge, and that wisdom is embodied in them from infancy to such an extraordinary degree that they have but to sit at ease and all kinds of facts will rush to them as does iron to a magnet.

There is in this idea just this much of truth, that men differ in natural gifts. A fool could not become a Macaulay; but a Macaulay could make himself to be but one degree removed from a fool in knowledge and more foolish than any fool on account of neglected opportunities. But farther than the fact of natural endowment it is a pernicious teaching to suppose that man has no control over his own future, and nothing to do to forward his advancement. The testimony of all men who have become great in any line of action has been that it was due to untiring work, to unremitting toil, to undying zeal, and unfaltering faith. They struggled and wept, prayed and fainted, and, if need was, drained their life blood for the sake of the cause they loved.

Such was the course by which men of genius attained their heights, and by which they became the shining lights of literature and art, of science and morals. They fought for their ideas as men of genius always fight, and they gained them by traveling along the royal road to knowledge—industry.

Strange, isn't it, that character is shown so plainly by laughter? It isn't simply the way we laugh, though that is very significant. Some one has suggested that that man who simply chuckles and does not laugh a hearty or free-hearted, open-mouthed laugh is not to be trusted; for the man who cannot laugh cannot be true. But this is not all. It is the things at which we laugh that count the most, for nothing shows refinement and culture more than the hearty laughter over that which is really worthy of mirth.

An old saying of Poor Richard is, that if you wish a thing done well you should do it yourself. But there is another one equally true, that if you cannot do it your elf it w ll be best done if you ask the busiest person to do it. It is a fact often observed, but one worthy of some philosophical consideration, that he who has the most work on his hands has apparently the most time at his disposal. It is the idler, the loiterer, the spendthrift of moments, who pleads "lack of time" as an excuse for neglected duties, while the busy man has leisure for self-improvement, recreation and social duties.

Why is it? One reason is that it is human nature to take as much time for any matter as is given. If a student has three hours in which to get a lesson, he will usually spend the three hours, but if he has only two he will get that same lesson as well as if he spent a longer time. Thus if a person is very busy, has

piled up before him as much work as he can well do, he wastes no time. And, as Goethe says, "One always has time enough if he will employ it well."

But there is a great evil which preys upon college students. I do not mean the doing of too much work, but the doing of work at improper times. Our bodies have been compared to engines, which can do just as much work as there is fuel provided for it to consume. Our bodies are like these engines in that there is a given quantity of work which they can do with the material provided, and the sleep and recreation which we take provide this food. Shall we, then, rob our tomorrow of its needed fuel by depriving ourselves of one or two or three hours sleep at night? That would be as foolish as to expect the engine to do double work with insufficient fuel. At times of course it is necessary to do extra work; but then the extra fuel must be supplied and time provided by scrupulous hoarding of minutes.

It is true that it is better to wear out than to rust out; but it is best to do neither. There is in this a happy medium, as in other things, where rust will be worn off and where time will be given for repair. A man, like land, reaches at last a point of diminishing returns; but this point can be carried farther and farther into his future by judicious care given to recuperation. Better to earn $1.75 a day for 50 years than to earn $2 for 25 years; and better to study hard for five hours a day during college and be able to study afterward, than to study ten hours a day during the four years and spend the next four recovering from nervous prostration.

It is folly to abuse one's physical being, whether by carelessness or over-zealousness. There are fixed laws of mother nature, and she will be obeyed. He who breaks these laws must pay the penalty, and a college student cannot plead as an excuse, "I did not know." It is our duty to know, and it is our fault if we do not. Therefore let us obey in meekness when we read penned by that hand that rules us, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther."

Perhaps there is nothing one receives in a college education which tends to broaden his mind in the right direction more than a knowledge of what to read and how to read it. There is little time to improve this while in college. There is other work which takes his time and attention, and if he get's opportunity to more than dip into the best literature he may consider himself fortunate.

Literature is not a specialty and one need have no fear of having an education only along certain lines if he makes the most of the advantages offered for work in English literature. This is the more to be emphasized when we consider how much useless and sometimes positively harmful literature there is afloat and how large a percentage of the masses read it. It is true that thousands of people exercise good taste in selecting reading matter, who have never had any instructions given them; but it is because they have a natural liking for good literature, not that they have acquired it. By far the larger part of the public read what it can conveniently get at, and what it can take in the easiest.

Years ago a well printed, well bound book was a treasure in a New England household, and the reason why the good books were not read was because they were expensive and hard to get. Now there is no such excuse as that. The best standard books are published in the cheaper bindings and are within the reach of every one.

There are various reasons why these books are not so widely read as they should be. One is because the public, as a whole, is not educated to appreciate them; another because it has not been educated to know what really are the best books, and a third, and the most important reason is, because their leisure is taken up in reading light and sensational literature, which either exaggerates human nature or developes vice and evil habits into apparent plausible excuses for its practice. Such literature as this is a waste of time, even if it does no harm. The new novels are usually paraded before the public as character sketches as they exist in ordinary life. In the preface we find the author saying that he believes in representing things as they really exist, and proposes to hide no evil tendencies and bad motives from the reader's observation, but to portray life as he has found it. The result is as I have stated. He throws all the worst features of human nature into the foreground of his story and attempts to defend them by justifiable motives.

So there is fiction and fiction, for some of our best books, whose influence is lasting and good, are classed as works of fiction.

Students are often surprised, when they begin to study standard authors and standard books, to find how little of the best literature they have read. They may have been omnivorous readers all their lives,

have read much of popular literature and kept well posted on current events. But many of them are al most ashamed to confess that they know so little of the general literature which the best educated men and women have produced and which takes the attention of the educated class in which they aspire to be numbered.

It is an old subject and a great deal has been said about it and about the value of good books. Sometimes this is unders'ood and sometimes it is construed to mean only religious books. This is not the case. We have our quota of religious books and we cannot do without them. But there are books whose subject is n ›t religious, yet the characters are the possessors of good morals. There are books which deal with passion and with the conflicting motives of human nature which do not misrepresent them by degrading them and all of these lead to higher lines of thought and broader and better views.

In the best books the authors put their whole souls into the work. They are not written to sell or to gain popular favor. The fervor of the theme is transmitted to the reader and he becomes a thinker along the same line of reasoning. There is no other commendable way for one person who knows how to express what many may have dimly conceived than to get it down in black and white and present it to his co-thinkers. Reading makes thi..king whether good or bad, and good reading is such as will breed the best kinds of thinking and develop in the reader's mind that embryo which has existed there all his life, but which needs the influence of a genius to develop and cultivate.

THE STORM.

The moon was beaming fitfully,
As on it dashed amid a sea
Of terror-driven cloud,
Like some bewildered phantom bark
Still plunging onward through the dark,
While tempests thundered loud.

Down where poor, hapless mortals dwell
The angry rain in torrents fell,
Like doom on Sodom old;
The blear-eyed street lights scarce could pierce
The dashing streets of rain, that fierce
And fiercer downward rolled.

The wanton torrent ruthless beat
The trembling leaves with trampling feet;
The thunder gave its shout;
The dancing puddles caught the glare,
As, like a demon of the air,
The lightning's gleam shot out.

A shudder shook her slender form,
As onward through the night and storm
A maiden struggled slow;
And closely and confidingly
She drew to him who joyed to be
Her blissful, bashful beau.

"Why do you tremble so?" he asked,
While once again the lightning flashed
And mountains seemed to fall;
And further o'er her precious form,
To better shield her from the storm,
He held his parasol.

"I s'pose I needn't fear a mite,"
She said, "for you protect me quite,
Because so slim and tall;
You make a first rate lightinng rod,
Convey the lightning to the sod,
And I escape it all."

They struggled onward through the night,
While blisters on his collar white
The wicked rain-drops made
And coursed adown his quivering spine
In vagrant, diabolic line,
Like Indians on a raid.

Thus silently into the night
We watch them vanish from our sight
Forever and for ave,—
The lengthy youth, mournful and sad,
The maiden coy, with heart so glad,—
And bid them both good bye.

ALUMNI NEWS.

'43. The following letter from the Hon. John C. Churchill on the levels of Lake Ontario will be read with interest and profit by dwellers on the borders of Lake Ontario in particular, and by an intelligent public generally. To these latter we may say that Judge Churchill has for many years given attention to this matter of lake level, and that his letter has been prepared with the care and accuracy which characterized his decisions while a justice of the supreme court of the State of New York. It most effectually extinguishes the theory that Lake Ontario is sinking.

To the Editor of the Oswego Times:

The following is an extract from an article entitled "Lake Ontario Sinking," recently published and quite extensively copied:

"The people around Lake Ontario are justly very much concerned regarding the gradual and continual sinking of the level of its waters. The *Scottish American* (of Toronto) says of the grave matter: 'Considering the immense area of the lake it might be thought impossible ever to mark a lowering of its water level, any more than in that of the Atlantic ocean.' But the

sinking of the level of the lake has not only been observed but it is found to be very marked, so much so that it is hindering navigation and is threatening the water supply of Toronto. It is at a lower point now than ever before; and it is maintained that it has a perceptible daily downward tendency. No doubt it is an immense lake, but the same rules apply to it as to a little reservoir. If you allow more water to flow out of it than flows into it, the level will inevitably sink; and if you sink or widen the hitherto prevailing channels of egress, then more water is certain to flow out than gets in. Now that is just what has happened to Lake Ontario. A year or two ago there was a removal of obstructions and a deepening of these out flowing channels in several places. The folk around Lake Ontario think the sooner the obstacles which which were removed are replaced the better, so as to prevent the outflow from being too rapid."—*Oswego (N. Y.) Times.*

'56. Judge W. H. Nichols of Randolph visited Middlebury Dec. 19.

'58. Rev. J. F. Whitney conducted chapel exercises a few mornings ago. He was visiting his son, Whitney, '97.'99

'59. Dr. George E. Lane of Ludlow died very suddenly Nov. 7. He was born in Williamstown, Vt. and graduated at Middlebury in the class of '59, being one of the charter members of the Middlebury chapter of Delta Upsilon Fraternity. He was principal of Leland and Gray Seminary from 1859 to 1862, when he took a medical course at U. V. M., receiving his degree in 1864. From 1864–1877 he practiced in Williamstown, when he removed to Ludlow, where he has since resided. He leaves two sons. He was highly esteemed and respected by his large circle of acquaintances, who were shocked by the news of his sudden death. His Alma Mater had in him a hearty supporter, who did honor to her training by his spotless life.

'60. In a book recently published, entitled "Chicago and the World's Columbian Exposition," is a page giving the life and portrait of E. B. Sherman.

'80. A. C. Peck visited in Vermont in December.

'90. W. H. Button, of the law firm of Button & Button, has been appointed clerk of the United States Senate committee on agriculture. Mr. Button will enter upon his duties at once.

LOCALS.

Wales, '96, will be in town through vacation.

Piper, '97, is clerking for Marshall during the holidays.

President Brainerd spent part of the vacation in Boston.

Lake, '99, preached at Addison Nov. 17 for Lamson, '96.

Whitney, '97, went home with Lamson, '96, for the vacation.

Hinman, '98. is teaching the Brooksville school in New Haven.

Botsford, '98, spent Christmas vacation with Prentis, '98, in Boston.

Davis, '96, and Bridgham, '97, spent a few days in Mendon last month.

Roscoe, '96, was recently visited by his brother and sister of New Haven.

Brown, '97, spent Sunday, Nov. 17, with Prof. Hoyt at his home in Addison.

Lamson, '96, spent part of the Thanksgiving recess in Burlington on business.

J. H. Shelley of Bellows Falls visited Parkhurst, '97, for a few days last month.

Moore, '96, will remain in Middlebury through vacation, staying at Prof. Seely's.

There were twenty-three students going south of Bellows Falls Christmas vacation.

Russell, '97, spent Thanksgiving vacation visiting friends in New York and vicinity.

Boyce, '99. entertained his brother of Winchendon, Mass., during Thanksgiving week.

Prof. Sanford gave the address at the closing exercises of the Castleton Normal school.

Misses Tyler, '96, and Gordon, '97, spent Thanksgiving with Miss Verder, '98, at Rutland.

The young ladies at Mrs. Avery's gave a candy-pull Dec. 13 to the young gentlemen who board there.

Haydon, '97, Hubbard and Cosgrove, '99, are additional borders at Mrs. Sanford's on Weybridge St.

Prof. and Mrs. McGilton received the Senior class at their home on Court St., Saturday evening Nov. 30.

Lamson, '96, spent the latter part of the Christmas vacation with Woodman and Whitney in Granville, N. Y.

The new equipments and elective work in Biology have proved very beneficial to those interested in that study.

Prof. Howard gave his popular lecture on "The